

DISPATCH

CLASSIFICATION

SECRET / KAPOK

DISPATCH SYMBOL AND NO.

Book Dispatch No. 1154

TO

INFO

Certain Chiefs of Stations and Bases

HEADQUARTERS FILE NO.

74-7-50.983

X-File

FROM

Chief, SR

DATE

SUBJECT

REDCAP/LCIMPROVE

SIS No. 2: Changes in Soviet Service Attache Components and Possible RIS Significance

RE: "43-3"-(CHECK "X" ONE)

MARKED FOR INDEXING

NO INDEXING REQUIRED

ACTION REQUIRED

INDEXING CAN BE JUDGED BY QUALIFIED HQ. DESK ONLY

REFERENCE(S)

Book Dispatch No. 1047

1. Since the mid-January 1959 date of Book Dispatch 1047, Headquarters has received additional confirmation that the budget reductions in the Soviet foreign service are world-wide and include cut-backs in staffing and in payments to staff personnel.

2. More information has also been received on the various changes in the Soviet service attache offices abroad. Although Soviet service attaches had been returning to the USSR prior to December 1958, it is from that date that the reductions in force became especially heavy. The closing of service attache offices started in December 1958 and continued into February 1959 -- during this period a total of eight service attache offices were closed by the Soviets, with the official duties being taken over by another Soviet service attache component in the same country.

3. Although a reduction in budgetary allotments could be an explanation<sup>2</sup> of these cut-backs of total personnel and the consolidation of the service attache offices, it is believed more likely that changes in the organization of military intelligence (GRU) were the principal cause.

a. Several reports have come to our attention regarding the assignment of SEROV to a GRU post (FYI, a reliable source has stated SEROV is now Chief of the GRU); some of these reports, received from press (and FYI also covert) sources, state that he is in charge of a new intelligence agency specializing in secret weapons, probably operating as part of the GRU but with special privileges. Further press speculation has dwelt on the possibility of his being Chief of the GRU itself.

b. There is no question that SEROV's assignment to the GRU would cause a shake-up within that organization. The reasons for such an assignment are not yet known; perhaps with the increased activity by the Western powers in the missile field, it was felt that more attention had to be paid to armed forces intelligence, and better results achieved therefrom. It might also be that the GRU operational officers had become lax, were not fulfilling their quotas with respect to recruitment of agents within specific target areas and installations. Internal political pressures may well play a significant role in changes in the military intelligence organization. The classic threat of the military to the security of a dictator needs no belaboring, and, in view of SEROV's oft-reported close relationship to KHRUSHCHEV, the placement of SEROV in a controlling position of the GRU would quite conceivably add to KHRUSHCHEV's peace of mind.

1 FYI, the countries are Denmark (MA office closed); Finland, UAR (Egyptian Region), Mexico, India, Sweden and Norway (NA offices closed); and the Air Attache office in Canada -- although we have received no official confirmation of the latter as yet.

2 FYI, a Soviet officer stated that the Soviets were reducing all of their official installations; another Soviet officer, according to an ODIBEX report, stated that the reduction of the attache office in one area was made for economic reasons.

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10-37  
1461

USE PREVIOUS EDITION.  
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c. In the past year, there has been an apparent increase by the GRU in the observed activity of illegal officers, and in the recruiting of illegal support agents, the latter to serve as letter drops, provide housing and business cover for "silent partners" (illegal Soviet agents), provide documentation for illegals, etc. Perhaps there is a greater emphasis on this activity since the more overt military, naval and air attaches have not been so successful in their fulfillment of requirements (note the number of PNGs), and have drawn too much attention to themselves due to their known intelligence functions. Perhaps, on the other hand, we merely have more extensive coverage of illegal activity. With the amalgamation and decrease of the military, naval and air attaché units throughout the world, it is possible that there will be an increase of GRU use of other types of cover, such as trade missions, TASS and other press services, AEROFLOT, SOVFRAKHT, etc. We would be interested in any identifications of such or the increase of GRU slots in other cover jobs.

d. Starting in late December a rash of TDY trips to the USSR on the part of military-naval attaches was noted; this travel has continued into March 1959. A total of nine or ten attaches have returned to the USSR on TDY for assorted reasons such as illness, visit to family, business, etc. The real reasons are not known, but we surmise that these persons (most of whom appear to be the GRU Residents in their areas) have been or are being given reindoctrination and reorientation in Moscow. In one other area, the service attaché who was to leave for the USSR may have been going on TDY or PCS<sup>2</sup>. In addition, during this same period, military attaches were posted in two countries by the Soviets for the first time.

e. From January 1959 to the present (24 March 1959) a series of replacements of Soviet service attaches has been noted, either direct replacements or in an attaché slot which had been vacant for some time. Although we have at present only three such replacements reported, it is possible that the next few weeks may bring forth many other replacements, especially for vacancies. Two of the vacancies mentioned above were in direct succession<sup>3</sup>; the other was for a long-vacant slot<sup>5</sup> and may be considered another evidence that the changes in the attaché system were not due solely to budgetary reasons.

-1 FYI. The Military Attaches of Finland, Sweden, Belgium, Norway, and Pakistan and the Naval Attaché to Greece have been to the USSR on TDY and have returned to their posts. The Military Attaches to Austria and the Netherlands left for the USSR on TDY during late January-March 1959, as did the Naval Attaché to Denmark. The Military Attaché to Italy applied for an exit-reentry visa during this period, but his travel dates are not known at present.

2 FYI. The Naval Attaché to Iran was to travel to the USSR, but whether for TDY or PCS is not known.

3 FYI. Iraq, c. December 1958 and Indonesia, February 1959.

4 FYI. The new Military Attaché to Ethiopia arrived in January 1959; visa request was made in January 1959 for the new Military Attaché to Switzerland.

5 FYI. Visa request was made in March 1959 for a new Military Attaché to Turkey.

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4. Four of the countries in which a service attache component has been closed appear to be unaffected by the travel from the USSR of a new service attache or by TDY of the present service attache to Moscow -- perhaps this will be changed in the near future, but at present it appears that no reindoctrination or retargeting was required in those areas. Altogether, eight countries, according to reporting received to date, have felt little or no impact of any change vis-a-vis service attaches or shifts in the GRU since December 1958. It will be noted that the countries as yet unaffected by these changes are major strategic areas. If reorientation and retargeting are indeed the purposes served by the flurry of Moscow visits, etc., these eight countries quite possibly represent the areas towards which efforts are being retargeted.

5. It is hoped this world-wide situation report will aid you by giving you some general information which can be discussed with liaison and by bringing you up to date. It is requested that Headquarters be notified by cable of any service attache changes in your area, as well as any other indicators you believe helpful in determining the extent of changes in the GRU and the present position held by SEROV. It will not be necessary to cable if the situation in your area remains as stated in this Book Dispatch for the GRU. Any similar changes noted in State Security (KGB) Rezidentury should also be cabled, including TDYs to Moscow of KGB Rezidents or high-level officers, etc. It is logical to anticipate changes in KGB structure and in orientation of its activities as a result of, if not in fact in conjunction with, such changes within the GRU.

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\* 1 FYI. The United States, France, Japan, Afghanistan, Burma, Lebanon, Great Britain and Argentina, although vacant slots for service attaches and staffs do exist in the latter two countries. In Argentina during March 1959 two transfers have been made of personnel -- one assistant attache to Mexico, one employee to the United States. Neither has taken any leave in the USSR, and no replacement for either has yet been dispatched from the USSR.



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